

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Board of Graduate Studies

Minutes from the Board of Graduate Studies meeting held on Wednesday 31 May 2006.

Present: Prof L Bridges (Chair), Dr D Kelly, Dr D Leadley, Prof P Stoneman, Prof C Read, Prof M Wills, Prof M Finn, Prof M Thorogood, Dr A Dowd, Prof R Napier, Prof N Charles, Ms E Levitt, Ms L Slator, Prof R Jackson, Dr C Bilton, Mr B Duggan, Mr R Cave.

Apologies: Prof E Peile, Prof P Elias, Dr M J Kooy, Prof M Thorogood, Dr J McEldowney, Mr L Askins.

In attendance: Ms A Quinn & Dr R Cure (Medical School Representatives for Item 70)

66/05-06 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 27 April 2006 be approved.

67/05-06 Chair's Business

a) Postgraduate Research Study Space

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Chair on study space for postgraduate research students, noting that discussions were ongoing regarding the possible release of space in various locations across the University.

b) E-Submission of PhD theses

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Chair on current debates about the electronic submission and storage of PhD theses.

c) Income from student fees 2006-07

RECEIVED:

A report indicating the income received by the University classified by student type and broken down by Department (paper BGS 37/05-06).

d) A Strategic Review of Postgraduate Research Student Numbers

CONSIDERED:

A paper previously submitted to Steering Committee for consideration on 8th May 2006 entitled '*Graduate School Matters*' (paper SC 303/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the report should be forwarded to the University's Research Committee for consideration.

e) Involvement of Probationary and Research Staff in Supervision

CONSIDERED:

An oral report from the Chair on restrictions of the University's current policies on supervision, particularly with regard to changes to the length of probation for academic staff.

RESOLVED:

That the Board consider the University's policy with regard to probationary staff and also the role of Research Staff at its meeting in October 2006.

68/05-06 Reports from the Faculty Graduate Studies Committees

RECEIVED:

Oral reports from the Chairs of the Graduate Studies Committees of the Faculties, noting that a visit of the AHRC Chief Executive to the University, including meetings with AHRC funded students, had taken place on 11 May.

69/05-06 Postgraduate Committee

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Chair of the Postgraduate Committee.

70/05-06 Proposals for new courses of Study

CONSIDERED:

A report from the 'pre-meeting' of a sub-section of the Board of Graduate Studies held on Tuesday 23 May 2006 which was convened to consider course proposals only (paper BGS 39/05-06), including course proposal documentation for the new courses listed below.

RESOLVED:

(a) Faculty of Medicine

(i) MSc Orthodontics

That the proposal from the Warwick Medical School for the introduction with effect from September 2006 of a MSc Orthodontics be approved, as set out in paper GCFM 10/05-06 (revised), noting that the title was MSc Orthodontics, not MSc in Orthodontic Dentistry as stated in the course proposal.

(ii) Management of Diabetes in Hospital Clinical Areas

That the proposal from the Warwick Medical School for the introduction of a CPD course entitled "Management of Diabetes in Hospital Clinical Areas" be approved as set out in paper GCFM 11/05-06 (revised), subject to the following amendments to be approved by the Chair

(A) Clarification of the level of the course.

(B) Provision of a signed copy of the course proposal.

(iii) MSc Research Methods in Health Sciences

That the proposal from the Warwick Medical School for the introduction of a MSc Research Methods in Health Sciences be approved as set out in paper GCFM 32/05-06, subject to the following amendments to be approved by the Chair:

- (A) Confirmation that a Postgraduate Diploma exit point was available.
- (B) Provision of a signed copy of the course proposal.

(iv) Postgraduate Award Design, Analysis and Interpretation of Epidemiological Research

That the proposal be approved as set out in paper GCFM 34/05-06, subject to receipt of a signed copy.

(b) Faculty of Science

(i) MSc in Computer Science and Applications

That a proposal from the Department of Computer Science for the introduction of a MSc in Computer Science and Applications in September 2007 be reconsidered in the Autumn Term 2006 noting that the Board endorsed the recommendations of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Science and that the proposal be referred back to the Department for clarification or confirmation of:

- (A) Entry points
- (B) CATS weightings
- (C) whether all modules are M-Level
- (D) whether pass mark is only defined by passing 50% or whether there is a limit to a number of modules that can be failed
- (E) the removal of 'no research content' comments from the proposal

(ii) MSc in Systems Biology

That a proposal for the introduction of a MSc in Systems Biology be approved subject to subject to the following amendments to be approved by the Chair:

- (A) Amendments recommended by the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Science.
- (B) Clarification of the current explanation of the examination weightings as 50/50.
- (C) reassurance that there will be sufficient guidance on module choices in light of all modules being optional.

(iii) MSc Communicating Multidisciplinary Science and MSc Chemistry with Scientific Writing

That the proposals for the introduction of a MSc in Communicating Multidisciplinary Science and MSc Chemistry with Scientific Writing be approved as set out in papers SGS 71/05-06 and SGS 72/05-06 respectively subject to the following amendments to be approved by the Chair:

- (A) Amendments recommended by the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Science
- (C) Clarification of where students are registered.

(iv) Front Line Leadership (CPD course)

That the proposal be approved as set out in paper SGS 69/05-06.

(c) Faculty of Social Studies

(i) MA Applied Social Research with Specialism in Migration, Ethnicity & Refugee Studies

RESOLVED:

That the course proposal (papers GFSS 327-9/05-06) be referred back to the Department to clarify:

- (A) Whether a law module should be included in this course
- (B) Course leader
- (C) Whether any modules are similar to those on the MA in Ethnic Relations
- (D) Exit points from the course
- (E) the value of the dissertation
- (F) whether the degree is an MA or MRes

Note: This proposal was withdrawn after the meeting.

(ii) MA Applied Social Research with Specialism in Social Work

That the proposal be approved as set out in papers GFSS 219-221/05-06.

(iii) MA Applied Social Research with Specialism in Health Studies

That the proposal be approved as set out in papers GFSS 214-216/05-06.

(iv) MA Research Methods for Applied Linguistics & English Language Teaching

- (A) That the Board endorse the recommendation of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Social Studies.

(B) That the course be approved subject to the amendments requested by the Faculty of Social Studies and clarification of exit point if the dissertation fails, as set out in papers GFSS98-99/05-06.

(v) PGCE courses

That the PGCE proposals be approved as follows:

- (A) General proposal for the introduction of a Masters level PGCE, as set out in paper GFSS 268/05-06.
- (B) PGCE (Primary) at Honours and Masters levels, as set out in paper GFSS 269 -273/05-06.
- (C) PGCE (Early Years), as set out in papers GFSS 278-282.
- (D) PGCE (Secondary) at Honours and Masters levels, as set out in papers GFSS 287-290/05-06.

(vi) MSc Management

That the proposal be approved as set out in papers GFS 89-91/05-06 (revised).

(vii) MSc Marketing and Strategy

That the proposal for the introduction of a MSc Marketing and Strategy be approved as set out in papers GFSS244-247/05-06, subject to the production of page 6 of GFSS 245

(viii) MSc Information Systems & Management

That the proposal (GFSS 234/05-06) be referred back to the Department to clarify and state whether modules are core or optional and to list dissertation (papers GFSS 233-236/05-06).

(ix) LLM in Legal Education (paper GFSS 333/05-06, copy attached)

That the proposal be approved subject to clarification of course aims, signatures and confirmation that all modules are at M-Level, noting that if a part-time certificate was being offered at 60 CATS, it should be entitled Postgraduate Certificate in Legal Education

71/05-06

Annual Course Reviews

(a) Faculty of Social Studies

REPORTED:

That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Social Studies recommended that the issue regarding office and/or work space for postgraduate research students should be referred to the Board of Graduate Studies.

CONSIDERED:

- (i) The Annual Review of Postgraduate Taught Courses 2004/05: Summary Report (paper GFSS 322/05-06)
- (ii) The Annual Review of Postgraduate Research Courses 2004/05 (paper GFSS 321/05-06)

RESOLVED:

That the Board request an update from the MPA Office in the Business School on the personal tutoring issue and concern over completion rates highlighted in the Annual Course Review (points 1.5 and 4.4).

(b) Faculty of Arts

CONSIDERED:

- (i) The Annual Review of Postgraduate Taught Courses 2004/05: Summary Report (paper AQSC 11/05-06)
- (ii) The Annual Review of Postgraduate Research Courses 2004/05: Summary Report (AQSC 12/05-06)

RESOLVED:

That the proposal to introduce a 'merit' classification at taught Masters level to distinguish those who have not achieved 'distinction' but have obtained a high pass mark should be referred to Faculty level for consideration, along with the suggestion that the University introduce a "starred distinction" (p5, p8).

(c) Faculty of Science

CONSIDERED:

- (i) The Annual Review of Postgraduate Taught Courses 2004/05: Departmental Reports for WMG, Statistics and Psychology (SGS 93/05-06).
- (ii) The Annual Review of Postgraduate Research Courses 2004/05: Departmental Reports for Physics, Psychology and Warwick HRI (SGS 94/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Science would investigate the absence of a number of Course Reviews from the Faculty of Science.

72/05-06

Scholarships

Scholarships Review Group

CONSIDERED:

A report outlining the findings of the Scholarships Review Group (paper BGS 41/05-06) together with a paper setting out responses of the Graduate Studies Committees of the Faculty Boards (paper BGS 35/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the report be approved, noting that the Board supported the involvement of Faculty committees in the selection process.

73/05-06 Periodic Review of Chemistry

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Periodic Review Panel on Postgraduate Degrees in the Department of Chemistry (paper BFS 14(a)/05-06), together with a response from the Department.

RESOLVED:

That the report from the Periodic Review Panel on Postgraduate Degrees in the Department of Chemistry be approved as set out in paper BFS 14 (a)/05-06.

74/05-06 QAA Report on Research Degree Provision at the University

CONSIDERED:

The report of the QAA Special Review of Research Degree Programmes at the University 2005-06 (paper BGS 36/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the Board was pleased to note the positive report from the QAA.

75/05-06 Submission & Qualification Rates

REPORTED:

Responses from the Graduate Studies Committees of the Faculties to paper BGS 24/05-06 addressing the issue of PhD submission rates:

(a) Faculty of Science

That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Science recommended:

- (i) That departments would probably not raise objections to introducing an MPhil to PhD upgrade process. However, the important principle is for good monitoring procedures and some kind of checking point, not necessarily an upgrade.
- (ii) That advertising literature would need to be looked at carefully, to make clear that MPhil registration is part of a programme leading to PhD.
- (iii) That the situation for international students would need to be considered, to ensure they get funding for the full period even if registered initially for an MPhil.
- (iv) That there may be issues with collaborative programmes, making MPhil registration difficult, and that this issue might make Science distinct from other disciplines.
- (v) That the details within paper BGS.24/05-06 will need to be looked at carefully, as a three year full-time registration period is no longer standard.
- (vi) That Science departments would prefer an approach based on financial incentives for timely completion, rather than fines for late submission.

(b) Faculty of Social Studies

That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Social Studies recommended that, whilst the Committee recognised that PhD submission rates in the Faculty needed improving, paper BGS 24/05-06 be referred back to the Board of Graduate Studies, it being noted that:

- (i) The paper did not appear to take into account the changing nature of the PhD, especially in terms of the inclusion of taught elements and generic skills training, and the effects that these might have on students being able to submit within a standard three-year period of registration;
- (ii) Whilst the Committee recognised that the production of the PhD thesis was the most important aspect to a student's registration it was not the sole reason. Research students should often be regarded as the academics of the future and thus obtaining appropriate teaching experience was also a key objective.
- (iii) That the proposal that prospective full-time research students be expected to complete 1,800 hours of research per academic year was too ambitious especially given the comments made under (d) above.
- (iv) That the Committee did not support the proposal for individual supervisors to be rewarded financially. Consideration should, instead, be given as to whether the appropriate department be rewarded in some way, it being recognised that other individuals in the department other than the supervisor will have influenced the date of the student's submission.
- (v) That the Committee did support an increase in the standard extension fee.
- (vi) That it was the view of the Committee that the Graduate School should be given stronger authority with regard to monitoring students' progress with respect to his/her expected submission date and withdrawing students who offer no explanation as to why they are not likely to meet that date.
- (vii) That the Board of Graduate Studies should consider the additional overheads and related problems involved with supervising part-time students before recommending a growth in this area.

(c) Faculty of Arts

That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Arts, at its meeting on 10th May 2006, discussed submission and qualification rates, considered paper BGS 24/05-06 and recommended (to the Board of Graduate Studies via the Board of the Faculty of Arts):

- (i) That the Board of Graduate Studies progress proposal 1, noting that the Graduate School Office would need to act expeditiously to update student records;

- (ii) That the Board of Graduate Studies modify proposal 2, to enable annual progress reviews to take place in departmental supervisors' meetings, not necessarily involving the Graduate School;
- (iii) That the Board of Graduate Studies progress proposal 3;
- (iv) That the Board of Graduate Studies reconsider proposal 4, noting that this was not supported by the Committee because:
 - (A) A charge of £100 per month of additional extension beyond the initial 6-month extension period could worsen the situation of students who may not have made a timely submission because they were in employment in order to finance their studies;
 - (B) A financial incentive for timely submissions could encourage incomplete and inadequate submissions.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Graduate School investigate the possibility of conducting a survey to acquire knowledge about the activity of research students outside time spent on their research project.
- (b) That the Board reconsider the issue of submission rates in the Autumn Term 2006.

76/05-06

Graduate School Programme

CONSIDERED:

A report from Dr Rachel Hardy, Graduate Skills Manager outlining recent activities and plans for 2006/07 (paper BGS 38/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That consideration be given to accrediting elements of the skills programme as it developed.

77/05-06

Guidelines for Students Studying Away from Campus

CONSIDERED:

A Report on Guidelines for Students Studying Away from Campus (paper BGS 40/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That Departments be consulted on the proposed Guidelines and the draft be brought back to the Board for consideration in October 2006.

78/5-06

Warwick Accommodation & Postgraduate Student Placements

REPORTED:

- (a) That some postgraduate students at the University go on placements as part of their course during the summer months, which may lead to difficulties in terms of accommodation contracts.

- (b) That Warwick Accommodation had agreed to make every effort to make other arrangements for students who had a placement as a programmed part of their course, but that this could not be guaranteed.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That Departments have a responsibility to liaise with Warwick Accommodation if they run courses which have programmed placements and advise them as early as possible of those students who will be undertaking placements.
- (b) That students should be advised to raise the issue if it will affect them at the beginning of the year.
- (c) That Departments should remind students that they are expected to be in residence while writing dissertations and that no allowance would be made by Warwick Accommodation for students who wished to return home to work on their dissertation.

79/05-06

External Examiners Reports on taught courses

CONSIDERED:

The process for considering external examiners' reports on taught postgraduate courses.

RESOLVED:

That External Examiners Reports would be reviewed on a rolling basis throughout the 06/07 academic year by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies rather than collecting them for review by Committee at the end of the academic year.

FE/SC/BGS May 06 minutes
14/06/2006